

## PARKS UPGRADE PROGRAM



This section describes the need for the City's investments in the Parks Upgrades Program.

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### Needs Assessment

Most of the City's low- and moderate-income or blighted neighborhoods are older, with infrastructure requiring rehabilitation or replacement. Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) investments expedite implementation of projects in these neighborhoods. Seattle's neighborhood plans require funds and resources for streetscape and park improvements, yet there are limited resources to implement many of the proposed projects. There is also a lack of sufficient opportunities for homeless persons to receive meaningful work training and experience to promote long-term economic development and community sustainability.

Insufficient community support for acceptance of certain types of projects results in project delays, redesigns and service compromises, or further deterioration of facilities.

Economic down-turns such as the current cycle prevent funding of small capital projects in areas economically disadvantaged, or not in prioritized locations, due to expenditures to larger 'needs' areas and civic projects already underway. Based on these issues, Seattle Parks and Recreation staff look at areas of concern that lack any financial support beyond maintenance, and develop annual plans that address special infrastructure needs - including Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible improvements to site circulation and on-site facilities such as comfort stations and play areas for children. Additional site improvements can consist of ADA fountains and additional landscape to support these amenities.

Further assessment of needs in this area is ongoing via community process and discussions with departmental staff familiar with park locations in their districts.

Priorities are based on whether funding exists for the location being considered, whether proposed improvements constitute maintenance, and if the proposed installation is beyond the program's scope in terms of size and nature. 'Small' capital projects must reside in areas qualifying for funds under the area benefit rules or be strictly ADA in nature.

### Tying the Needs to Proposed Strategies

(See Section 4: Strategic Plan – Goal 4 for further detail)

Identified Needs	Proposed Strategies	Outcomes
Lack of sufficient opportunities for homeless persons to receive meaningful work training and experience to promote long-term economic development and community sustainability	Use of the Seattle Conservation Corps (SCC) for Parks Upgrade Program projects	Between 10-20 Seattle Conservation Corps participants will work on Parks Upgrade Program projects and receive job training in areas such as landscaping, concrete finishing, trail building, grading, light construction and heavy equipment operation.
Most of the City's low- and moderate-income or blighted neighborhoods are older, with infrastructure requiring rehabilitation or replacement.	Implementing Various Capital Improvements (including ADA projects) to CDBG-eligible park sites	Small-scale capital improvements will be made at approximately 20-40 CDBG eligible parks annually, improving the quality of life in those low-mod income areas.

## Available Data

Using 2000 Census data and HUD's area-benefit requirements, the Department of Parks and Recreation developed the following needs assessment for the Parks Upgrade Program:

Of approximately 423 sites within the City of Seattle's park system, approximately 118 qualify under the low-moderate income requirements (the site's 0.25 mile service area contains at least 51% of all households within low-moderate income levels). Of these qualifying sites, only 12 have received non-CDBG funded capital investments during the past three years, and only 39 have received CDBG-funded capital investments during the past three years.